



Washington
Secretary of State
SAM REED

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August 31, 2007

Asotin County Canvassing Board
PO Box 129
Asotin, WA 99402

Dear Canvassing Board Members:

In accordance with the Revised Code of Washington, (RCW) 29A.04.570, the State Election Certification and Training Program conducted a comprehensive review of election procedures in Asotin County during the 2006 Primary Election.

RCW 29A.04.570 requires a follow-up visit prior to the next primary or general election to verify the County Auditor's Office has taken the necessary steps to make the changes recommended in the review report.

The reviewer visited the Asotin County Elections Department on August 8, 2007 and found that the Asotin County Elections Department has changed many of the office practices and procedures to comply with the recommendations in the review report.

Prior to the submission of the Final Review Report, the Asotin County Elections Department was already in full compliance with the following recommendations: mailing all required confirmation and verification notices with pre-paid return cards; requiring a signature on all cancellation forms; mailing ballot applications in a timely manner to inactive voters; publishing the required notices of public meetings; and, having on file with the Auditor, a written delegation of duties by the Canvassing Board to the Auditor. The Elections Department also implemented a procedure to prevent multiple voting when a voter used a disability access unit by immediately indicating a vote was cast on the voter's record.

The Elections Department provided sample copies to the reviewer of the questionnaires sent to cities and districts in 2007, the notices to candidates that no primary would be held, a sample 2007 Primary ballot printed in a color to distinguish it from the official ballot, as well as a revised confirmation notice used to contact voters.

Special and hospital absentee forms, with the correct format and verbiage, will be available to voters by the 2007 General Election.

The Asotin County Auditor and the Asotin County Deputy Auditor successfully completed the State's Election Administrators Certification process. Asotin County is now in full compliance with RCW 29A.04.540.

The Auditor, using federal grant money, has sent employees to all election trainings sponsored by the Secretary of State in 2007. Asotin County has also added a part-time employee position to help offsetting the minimal staffing in the department.

Federal grant money was used to construct dedicated work space for ballot processing, plus provide separate and secure storage for ballots and the tabulation equipment.

All of recommendations for improving security of the elections process have now been implemented, with the exception of securing the door keys used to access the tabulation area; this issue will be resolved by 2008.

An exclusive ballot deposit site has been established at the Asotin County Courthouse. A second ballot deposit site will be established somewhere in the county by the 2007 General Election. Placement of the Disability Access Unit so as to protect voter secrecy, and still provide access, will be resolved by November 2007.

Some of the recommendations made are not applicable to the current election year. By 2008 the following actions will be implemented to comply with review recommendations: correcting the notice of partisan and nonpartisan primaries; revising voting instructions and provisional ballot materials to make them current with the law; and, developing office procedures that will include, but not be restricted to, office security, the placement of races and measures on the ballot, and issuance of special absentee ballots.

Asotin County has not yet established a Disability Access Committee. The County Auditor is attempting to form a joint committee with neighboring Garfield County, as permitted under RCW 29A.46.260. Asotin County should make the Disability Access Committee a priority and ensure that the Committee has a plan submitted as soon as possible.

I commend the Asotin County Auditor and Staff for their obvious dedication to the election process and their ability to implement so many changes in such a limited time period.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (360) 725-5770 or lnieland@secstate.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Nieland".

Libby Nieland
Elections Program Specialist